

THE
Devil of a Wife:
OR, A
Comical Transformation.
As it was Acted by
His Majesty's Servants
AT THE
THEATRE
IN
DORSET-GARDEN.

Veni, Vidi, Vici.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. KNAPTON, at the Crown in
St. Paul's Church-yard, 1715.

THE

OF A

CONSTITUTION

AND

HIS MASTER'S SERVANTS

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

THE

By Thomas Leven. an Actor
and Dancing Master - flourished
in the Reigns of Charles II and
James II. he died on the
20th Dec^r 1688. at the early
age of 36 years.

This, his only dramatic work
was first printed in 16th
1686. and is remarkable
for its repeated transformations
- having been brought before
the public in various shapes -
the most successful Alteration
goes under the name of
the "Devil's Play"

SEPTEMBER, 1733.

ENIGRAM ON a Lady, who despised DRYDEN's
Fables, and the Comedy of the Drummer;
while she prais'd HAYWOOD's Novels, and the
Farce call'd *The Devil of a Wife*.

I *Till of a lady, (her first name is KITTY)*
Wise never was wife, nor will ever be witty;
Tis a critic, a wit, in her voice, in her thought;
As a wit she can scold, as a critic find fault.
As true she can feel (for deep learning her gift is)
As a young tender lord, or an old country justice.
To her DRYDEN's Fables are stuff of no use;
HAYWOOD's Novels have charms—they're so
charmingly false!
For ADDISON's Drummer, her wit never spares it?
Like her neighbour's good name, all to pieces she tears it
Tho' the poor drumming devil to her has no merit;
Tis the devil of a wife is a devil of spirit.
Like to like! she's a wit, she's the larce to the life;
For the wit of a woman is—the Devil of a wife.



T H E

Epistle Dedicatory.

To my worthy Friends
and Patrons at *Locket's*
Ordinary.

YOU are not to be told, that Poets
are sawcy, very sawcy, mighty
sawcy, but your (wou'd be) Poet, or
Farce Snipper-Snapper, such a promiscu-
ous Riddle me Re, as my self, always
super-abounding: Therefore do I hearti-
ly hope, but more humbly entreat, that
with the piercing Eye of Understanding,
and thro' the Orbicuous Glass of Rea-
son,

The Dedication.

son, you will perfectly discern, and then wholly attribute the bold Presumption of this sharp Epistle (as I may justly term it) to my seeming self, as audacious *Jewon* the Poet, and not to my real self, as Modest Mr. *Jewon* the Player. But now I intend to give my self an unwilling Loose to Eloquent and Rhetorical Notions (which to me have always prompt and ready been.) *Et ad Unguem, & ad Pennam*, and forthwith cast my self upon the naked Confines of *Mediocrity*, and in plain Terms come pat and closely to you thus.

You may please to call to mind, and will remember that presently after our *Catcall Dissolution*, which for some time, from our Natural Home, and Provident Stage, dispers'd abroad Us Under-acting *Jews*, without a *Moses* to provide our *Manna*: And after the Prayers (as you may guess) of the many murmuring Hirelings, for those whose whistling Breath blew 'em to a more remote, and far worse Climate, 'twas then the needful I (by Dint of Hunger forc'd) wrote
you

The Dedication.

you know full well) such powerful Lines to your unmindful Senate, that had ye not all had Hearts of Stone, you would have melted into retaliating Favours. Your speedy Promises were great, but your slow Performances (witness ye unassisting Gods) alas, were small. Let this my All-commanding Style, and most ingenious Piece then now revive, and whet your almost blunted Purpose, to a more lively, quick and solid Answer: Let me endear ye all (my yet but seeming Friends and promising Patrons only) to a more ponderous Resolution, and Candid Answer to him that, Gad judge me, ye know to be.

Your humble and obedient Servant,

THO. JEVON.

THE
PREFACE

TO THE
Grave, Learned, Judicious
and Deliberate.

THE modern Age, and present Representations, unknown to the antiquated Limits which in all Bounds of prevalent Attonements, supercede the Equinoctial of Illuminary Spirits, are not in the least captivated with the Decorum of Dress, fortunate and succeeding Action, exhausted Master of volatory

The Preface.

latory arrided Flastness, that now is not in self, De Re Imaginaria neque supposita de futura, Neither can their profound Precepts, who were known and ador'd as Patriarchs in Natures primitive Sanguinity with collateral Adherents, with the Noise of what was heretofore deliver'd, inculcate Predominancy to the Right Line of Monarchial and Episcopal Adherences. Therefore, if in greater and more evident Points, the Lawyer can no more be without his Fee, than the Lord Chancellor his Mace, or a Poet without Errors (my self alone exempted) why should the Judgment of a Man that is partially byass'd against the Banditti, rule the Author's Opinion in his own Hemisphere, and discuss at large the Virtue of Jobson's Wife, without the Management of Hobb's Leviathan? Why should Shakespear, Johnson, Beaumont, Fletcher, that are no way Adequate to the profound Intellects of my present Attornement, be ranked above the Laborious, tho' dull Statesmen.

The Preface.

—Sed Vastum Vastior Ipse,
Sustulit Ægydes, &c. (Ov. Metam.

Those several malignant Assertions offered, a large and compendious Resolution ought to be maturely responded, especially when the Eclipse of Matrimony is subtervaneally trod down. As to the main Notion of Poligamy, alscended under a Surtoot of Imagination, We take it thus. Alexander was Great and Victorious in his Mediterranean Engagements of Hospitality. To the contrary, Julian the Apostate recites his own Benevolences in semi Octavo of Traditional Usury: Which plainly denotes the first Egression, and the last Denotation. So that if we come to modern Affairs, you will find that the masqued middle Gallery, being by Command superior, brought bare-fac'd to the Pre-existent Sparks Construction, more amuses the Sun-shine Planet of his Scarlet Coat, than the Beat of an Irish Drum to an East-India Interloper. For what says Terence (Paucis te Volo) which manifestly denotes the condescending Temper of
the

The Preface.

the Male, and the diving Aspect of the Female. Now, if after so long a Concupiscential Appetite, the Novelty of Wedding is to be adjudg'd Ceremonious, I leave to my Lord Chief Justice's Tipstaff to examine, and make all even between the Pope and my Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

P R O-

PROLOGUE

Spoke by

Mr. JEVON.

HOW long is't since you saw I pray,
That strange old fashion'd thing call'd a New Play.
Or how long indeed d'ye think 'twill be
Before you taste that long'd for Novelty?
You may set your Hearts at rest for this Age,
Union and Catcalls have quite spoil'd the Stage.
Time was the Poets could cock, look big, and cry,
Damn these sawcy Players, let's all agree,
And starve the Rogues, the Times Friends turn'd be,
And I am turn'd Poet, there's a Farce d'ye see.
But now to my Generation Friends, } Points to some
What quick Return, or what concise Amends. } particular Peo-
ple in the Pit.

Have you, my ever honour'd, ever dear,
Renowned, whistling Patrons made appear
To him that is your Servant every where?
My Name's Mr. Jevon, I'm known far and near.
But no more Words in so much Company
Satisfaction I must have, and quickly;
Or God I'll leave off writing directly.

}
}
} Let

PROLOGUE.

Let me have a Pledge of it now y'are here,
Or in your Balls you may forget I fear.
Be favourable to this same piece at hand,
And d'ye hear, Friends, don't, shall I, shall I stand.
If I in Pocket find you dive for Catcall,
I'll let down Curtain, I'll tell ye that all.
Catcalls well tuned might do well in Opera's,
They'd serve for Hoboys to fill up a Chorus.
Or in a French Love Song, observe you now,
A Cadmeus Pur qua, Mene Vou, [Sings.
Begar Monsieur, it be De pretty Whyne,
Ki La D'ance De Meneway, Oh it be very fine. [Dances.
Dances you have, and various here to night,
But they are English all, all English quite.
Throughout, English Songs, Farce English too,
That's French Scene, }
All Nonsense without any more ado
Kickshaws like this serve for a Lenten Dish,
If not for Flesh, pray let it serve for Fish.
And since Pennance at this Time's in fashion,
Come three Days for Mortification.

The

The Actors Names.

M E N.

Sir Rich. Lovemore, An honest Country-Gentleman, beloved for good } Mr. Griffin.
 Old Engl. House-Keeper.
 Rowland, and Longmore, Sir Richard's } Mr. Bowman.
 two Friends. } Mr. Peryn.
 Butler, Cook, Footman, and Coachman, } Mr. Saunders.
 Servants to Sir Richard. } Mr. Percival.
 } Mr. Low.
 The Ladies Father. Of the Old Strain: } Mr. Norris.
 A Fanatick.
 Noddy, A hypocritical Fanatick Parson, } Mr. Powell.
 loves to eat and cant, Chaplain to }
 my Lady Lovemore.
 Jekson, A Psalm-singing Cobler, Tenant, and Neighbour to Sir Richard, } Mr. Jevon.
 Doctor. A Magician. [Mr. Freeman.
 Nyder. } Two Spirits.
 Abisnog. }
 Countryman.
 Blind Fiddler. *blind fiddler 93*
 Foot boy.

W O M E N.

Lady Lovemore, Wife to Sir Richard. A proud Fanatick, always canting and brawling. A perpetual Fixen and a Shrew (a blessed Wife. } Mrs. Cook.
 Jane, and Lettice, Lady Lovemore's } Mrs. Price.
 Maids. } Mrs. Twyford.
 Nell, Jekson's Wife, a simple innocent } Mrs. Percival.
 Girl.
 Tenants, Servants, Dancers, Singers, Waffallers.

T H E

Lady

T H E

Devil of a Wife :

O R, A

Comical Transformation.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Enter Jobson the Cobler, and Nell his Wife.

Nell. **G**OOD Husband stay with me to Night,
and make an End of the Holiday at
home.

Jobson. Peace, peace, and go spin, for if I want any
Thread for my stitching, I will punish you by virtue of
my Sovereign Authority.

Nell. I warrant you : But you'll go to the Ale-
house, spend your Money, and get drunk, and come
home like *Old Nick*, and use one like a Dog.

Jobson. How now Brazen Face, do you speak ill of
the *Government* ? I am King in my own House, and this
is Treason against my Majesty.

Nell.

Nell. I don't understand your Stuff, but prithee don't go to the Ale-house.

Johnson. Well, then, I will not go the Ale-house, I have made an Appointment with Sir *Richard Lovemore's* Butler, and am to be Princely drunk in Punch at the *Hall-Place*; we shall have a Bowl big enough to swim in.

Nell. O Lord Husband, the new Lady, they say, will not suffer a Stranger to come into her House; she grudges a Draught of Small Beer, and several of this Town have come home with broken Heads from her Ladyship's own Hands, for but smelling Strong Beer in her House.

Job. A Pox on her for a Fanatick Jade, she has almost distracted the good Knight, but she's abroad feasting with her Relations, and will scarce come home to Night, and we are to have much Drink, a Fiddle and Gambals.

Nell. But her fanatick Parson will disturb you.

Job. If he does, we will toss the Hypocrite in a Blanket, or kick the sanctify'd Coxcomb to a Jelly.

Nell. O dear Husband, let me go with you, we'll be as merry as the Night's long.

Job. Why how now, you bold Bettrise, what would you be carry'd to a Company of smooth'd-fac'd, eating, drinking, lazy Serving-men; Rogues, whose Nourishment runs all into Lechery? No, you Jade, I will be no Cuckold.

Nell. I'm sure they would make me welcome; you promis'd me I should see the House: Sir *Richard* and the Family have not been there since you married and brought me to Town.

Job. Why, thou audacious Strumpet, dar'st thou dispute with me? Go home and spin, or else my Strap will wind about thy Ribs.

Johnson
Sings.

*He that has the best Wife,
She's the Burthen of his Life,
But for her that will scold and will quarrel
Let him cut her short (vel;
Of her Meat and her Sport,
And ten times a day woop her Barrel.*

Nell.

A Comical Transformation

3

Nell. We poor Women must be Slaves, and never have any Joy, but you Men run and ramble, and take your Swing.

Job. Why you most *Pestilent Baggage*, will you be hoopt? Be gone.

Nell. Well, I must go.

Job. Here, now I think of it, here's Six pence for you, get Ale and Apples, stretch and puff thy self up with Lamb's-Wooll, rejoyce and revel by thy self, be drunk and wallow in thy own Sty, like a Sow as thou art.

Jobson Sings

He that has a Wife, &c.

[*Exit Nell and Job.*]

Enter Sir Richard Lovemore's Butler, Cook, Serving-men, Chambermaid, and other Women Servants.

But. I would our blind Minsirel and our dancing Neighbours were here, that we might rejoyce a little, while our Termagant Lady is abroad; I have made a most *Sovereign Botol of Punch*, and I have a good Hoard of *Wine and March Beer*.

Jane. We had need rejoyce sometimes, but our devilish new Lady will never suffer it, when she knows it.

But. I will maintain it, there's more Mirth in a *Gally*, than in our *Family*; our Master *Sir Richard* is the worthiest Gentleman, nothing but Goodness, Sweetness and Liberality.

Serv. Man. But here's a House turn'd topsie turvy; from *Heaven to Hell*, since her coming hither.

Maid. We are all alike, none of us can 'scape her Rage and Fury.

Jane. His former Lady is a *Saint in Heaven*, and lived so on *Earth*, all Mildness and Gentleness.

But. Ay, rest her Soul, she was, but this is inspired with a *Legion of Devils*, and one plaguy *Non-con-Parson*, worse than all, that makes her lay about her like a Fury.

Jane. I'm sure I always feel her in my Bones, she has an Instrument of Correction made of Whale-bone, and for fear I should forget her good Usage, she res-

4 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

freshes my Memory every Quarter of an Hour : If her Complexion don't please her, or she look yellow in a Morning, I am sure to be laid on, and look black and blue for't.

Cook. Pox on her, when I carry up her Breakfast, I dare not come within reach of her, I have some six broken Heads already. A *Lady*, quoth a ! a She-Bear is a civiler Animal : She has robb'd me of my Cunny-skins, my Kitchen-stuff, and all my Vails ; and brought a damn'd eating, godly Fellow with her, that scarce will be content with five Meals a Day.

But. None of you have been used as I have.

Jane. That's because none of us had a Spade-Beard of a Foot long.

But. I that have lived five and forty Year in the House, and had for twenty Years preserv'd a reverend Beard, which made me noted for Wisdom and Discretion thro' all the Country, and she to demolish this poor Beard in an Instant.

Cook. I beseech you, by what means did she depopulate and waste your fruitful Chin.

But. Why it was ruined by *Fire*, with her own cursed Hands she sing'd it off ; she said it always smelt of Brewis, and was a Sponge that soak'd up more *March Beer* in a Month, than any six the ablest Drunkards in the Hundred could in a Year : I sav'd nothing but this same one Sprig that grew upon a Wart, and that by my Nail.

Jane. What pity 'twas to lose such an Emblem of Gravity and Wisdom.

But. Ay, I am become a Shame to my Neighbours, and dare not show my Chin before 'em : Oh that Beard, that poor Beard, what Authority it had amongst 'em ! I had e'en as live she had gelt me.

Serv. Man. I believe thou had'st, thy Beard was of as much use as any Implement about thee.

Jane. Methoughts he look'd like one of the old Patriarchs in the *Arras* ; I have seen an old *Eastern King* in a Mortlack hanging, very much resembling his Philosophy.

But. Oh Mrs. *Jane* you do my poor Beard too much Honour, but farewell dear Beard, I shall never see the like of thee.

Cook.

A Comical Transformation.

5

Cook. No, a Man may as well hope to have two Crops of Oak Timber from the same Place, as two such Beards from one Chin in an Age.

Maid. Pish, what Hurt does the Loss of a Beard do? I was making a Shift for her, and she did not like my lacing it down: She turns the wrong-End of her Fan, strikes me on the Mouth so hard, that she beat out two of my Butter-Teeth? A shame on her light Fingers.

Jane. She makes the Coach-man chain the Footmen to Posts, whip 'em with Dog-whips, and stands by to see the Execution.

But. Heaven have Mercy upon my poor Master, this devilish Termagant, Scolding, Religious Woman will be the Death of him; I never saw a Man so alter'd all the Days of my Life.

Cook. There's a perpetual Motion in that Tongue of hers, and a damn'd shrill Pipe enough to break the Drum of a Man's Ear, I wonder my Master does not kick her and her Parson out of Doors.

But. Her Parson, her Weaver; I believe he never had any Orders, but an inward Motion from his Stomach, which inclines him to eat more than a Wolf, and this Motion is an inward Calf.

Nod. (within) Why, Cook *John*, Cook, where art thou?

Cook. I'm here, this his outward Call: now is he almost famish'd for his second Afternoon's Luncheon.

Noddy. Why, *John*, why dost thou neglect me? my Spirits are exhaled, evaporated in Study and Labour: I feel as it were a strange kind of Emptiness, I have not eat this two Hours.

But. A Pox on him, set him fast by the Teeth, or else he'll disturb us.

Cook. I have a couple of cold Chickens, some *Westphalia* Bacon, and *Christmas* Pyes.

Nod. For your *Christmas* Pyes, I defy them, they are abominable, scandalous, and idolatrous, they savour of *Rome*, they are so many Fortifications wherein the Whore of *Babylon* intrenches herself, I will down with them, I will beat them down, my Zeal will not suffer such *Papery* in this House; ye are my Flock, I will see

6 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

that that Wolf, the Whore, does not prey upon you and devour you; down, down I say with all her Out-works and high Places, her superstitious and idolatrous Structures and Buildings, whether in Minc'd-Pyes or otherwise: Your *Christmas* is an Idol, a very Idol truly; have I not seen him in a profane Mask, in the Habit of an old Man with a long spade Beard, and the deluded Rout have worshiped and fallen down before him; your Bagpipes are as Pagan Organs, and your Wasselers lewd and filthy Choristers unto Satan, I may not bear these Rags of the Smock of that Scarlet Whore, my Spirit rises, my Zeal boileth and bubbleth up as it were within me, I am transported with a Holy Fury: But do you hear *John Cook* send up those Chickens.

Cook. What both?

Ned. Yea both, with some Westphalia Bacon, and do you hear, *John*, a Tart? And you *Mr. Chipp*, let me have a Bottle of Sack, a Bottle of Ale, and a Bottle of March Beer, by help of this Refreshment I shall be able to hold out till Supper. Fare ye well till that Time.

(Exeunt with Cook and Butler.)

Fane. What shall we do with this base sniveling Hypocrite? He'll spoil our merry Meeting.

Serv. Man. I'll warrant you 'tis but putting out the Candles, and we'll make him weary of his Canting, when e'er he comes among us.

Re-enter Butler and Cook.

But. So his Provision's gone up.

Cook. He's fast by the Teeth for one Hour.

*Enter the blind Fidler, Jobson, and others,
Men, Women, and Neighbours.*

But. Oh welcome, welcome, here's to our Wish, the Minstrel and our Neighbour! Oh old Acquaintance, Goodman *Jobson*, how dost thou?

Job. By my Troth I am sharp set towards the Punch, and am now come with a firm Resolution, tho' a poor Cobler, to be as drunk as a Lord; I am a true *English* Heart, and look upon Drunkenness as the best Part of the Liberty of the Subject.

Fane.

A Comical Transformation.

7

Jane. Why did you not bring your Wife with you?

Job. Because here are Waggs, young Rogues, and a Man may be a Cuckold before the King's Health can go round.

But. Jobson, we'll have a Catch, strike up blind *Will*: Ah *Jobson*, I have heard thee out-sing the Lark or Nightingal, thou art heard above all the Church; let there be never so many Voices, thine will still be predominant.

Cook. Ay, and he holds out the Note of one Verse, till the Clark begins to sing the next; he has a pure Wind.

Job. Ay, I'm pretty good at a Psalm, I have some Reason for it, I have stich'd Soles this Thirty Years to those Psalms you speak of.

But. Come let us fetch out our Bowl of Punch in solemn Procession. Now let us have a Catch in Honour of Punch.

(They bring out the Bowl of Punch, singing a Catch and dancing about it, after which they sit down and drink.)

I.

*While ye court a damn'd Vintner for such nasty Liquor,
As worse was ne'er swallow'd by dull Country Vicar,*

And the insolent Rascal will draw what he pleases,

*While Boys you may kick 'em, when Masters y'intreat 'em,
And from Drawers you up into Alderman beat 'em?*

But they get your Money, and you get Diseases.

II.

*Stum, Brimstone, Lime, Arsnic, fond Drunkards bewitch,
While the villanous Host not content to be rich,*

By brewing and Poyson sells that by false Measure,

No Liquor like Punch gives delight to the Soul,

When we drown all our Cares i'th' Bottom o'th' Bowl,

Sincere are our Joys, and immortal our Pleasure.

III.

We brew for our selves, and we know each Ingredient

As well for our Health as our Mirth is expedient,

And whoever drinks Punch shall live merry and long,

It spurs up Fade Nature, and quickens the Blood,

Which if it finds bad, it ne'er fails to leave good;

And while we drink Punch, we shall ever be young.

Cook

8 *The Devil of a Wife: Or*

Cook. And after that, I'll bring up the Rear with a swinging Turkey Pye, and a mighty Gammon, besides much Pyes, and other Appurtenances belonging to our Office.

Cut. Here's our Master's Health in a Bumper. *Huzzah.*

Cook. Our Lady's Confusion in another. *Huzzah.*

Enter Noddy, knowing the Leg of a Chicken.

Nod. What meaneth this lewd, profane, and babylonish Noise, ye Popish Locust, ye Idolatrous Vipers, this sanctified Place is become a Den of wicked ones. Thou blind misleader of the Blind, with thy lewd Anti-Christian Squacks, avant, avant, I say *Belzebub*, avant.

(He kicks and beats the blind Fidler. They put out the Candles, and toss Noddy one from another, and beat him.)

Hold, hold, what do ye mean?

Ye Sons of Darkness! defy you.

I can suffer for the Truth, I am a Witness.

But. Blind him and gag him.

Cook. Bind him Hand and Foot.

Nod. I will flee away from further Persecution, Vipers my Lady will come, she will, to your Confusion.

Serv. Man. And as you like this do you come again.

But. A Pox on him; to our Business now he is gone. The King and all the royal Family in a Bumper. *Huzzah.*

(Noddy steals out, they light the Candles.)

Cook. Are you ready for your Collation?

Fane. No, no, we'll have a Bout at Blindman's-buff, and a Dance first.

Joh. Ay, ay, come I'm old Dog at that, blind me, perhaps I'm as great a Master at Blindman's-buff as any one in Europe, no Dispraise to any Man. *(They blind him and dance a Dance.)*

Enter Sir Richard Lovemore and my Lady.

Lady. O Heaven and Earth! What's here within my House! Is Hell broke loose! What Troops of Fiends is here, Sirrah you impudent Rascal?

Sir Rich. My dear be patient, 'tis *Christmas*, a Time of Mirth, of Jollity, it has always been the Custom of my House to give my Servants Liberty in this Season, and all

my

A Comical Transformation.

9

my Country Neighbours used to meet, and with their innocent Sports divert themselves.

Lady. Prithee hold thy prating, meddle with thy own Matters, can't I tell how to govern my own House without your putting in an Oar? shall I ask you leave to correct my own Servants?

Sir Rich. Good Lady, I thought this had been my House, and those my Servants, and those my Tenants.

Lady. Did I bring a Fortune to be thus abus'd, and snub'd before my Servants, do you call my Authority in question, you inhumane Monster? Look you to your Dogs, your Kites and filthy Cattle, your Faulconers, Huntsmen, and your nasty Grooms abroad, I'll make you know 'tis my Province to govern here, nor will I be controul'd by e'er a hunting, hawking, unthinking Knight in *Chri- stendom*.

Sir Rich. A Pox upon all Fools that shall marry for Money; I am married to a continual Tempest, Strife and Noise, Canting and Hypocrisy are the daily Portion I have with her; but I'll not bear this long, if I by Force oppose her, she falls into Fits, and raves worse than any one in Bedlam.

Lady. You stinking Scoundrels, and you filthy Jades, I'll teach you to junkit thus and steal my Provision, I shall be Jevour'd by you.

But, I thought Madam we might be merry once upon a Holiday.

Lady. Holiday, you popish Curr, is one Day more Holy than another? And if it be, you'll be drunk upon't, you Rogue, that by your late demolish'd Beard, thought your self an Example to the Family, is this your Example?
(*She beats him o'er the Head.*)

Come you Minx, you impudent Flurt are you giggling after an abominable Fiddle? All dancing is whorish, Hufwife.

(*Jane is sneaking to get away,
she catches her and lugs her.*)

Jane. O murder, murder, she has pull'd off both my Ears.

Sir Rich. Madam, for Shame, remember your Sex and Quality.

Lady.

10 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

Lady. Remember your own Fools Head, shall you instruct me?

Enter Noddy.

Nod. Madam, I rejoice that your Ladyship is return'd.

Lady. Oh good and holy Man, how came my Family, in my Absence thus debauch'd, drunken, profane and superstitious.

Nod. When my Ears were first offended with these lewd Noise, I came down grieved in Spirit, and rebuked them, commanding them to surcease from these superstitious and idolatrous Rites which they sacrifice to that Idol, that beastly Idol, old Father *Christmas*; and while my Spirit was full of Godly Chastisement, they did extinguish the Lights, surrounded and hemm'd me in, and these Instruments of Satan did buffet me, even unto great Anguish, and I am fore bruised in Body.

Lady. Alack, good Man! Oh ye Spawn of *Belial*, the Fry of the Bottomless Pit, how now *Sirrah*, who are you in the Bumble, you Buzzard? [*To Jobson.*]

(She takes the Parsons Cane, and beats all the Company, Jobson is stealing by.)

Job. I am an honest Psalm-singing Cocker, Madam, if your Ladyship would go to Church, you would hear me above 'em all there.

Lady. I'll try thy Voice now.

(She strikes him e'er the Pate.)

Job. Nounz, what a Pox, what a Devil ails you?

Lady. O profane Wretch, wicked Varlet!

Nod. Thou Son of the Old Serpent, avaunt thou Frog of the Lake of Darknes.

Job. Avaunt thou coxcomby Son of a Whore of the new Light.

Nod. Be gone, avaunt, be gone from within these Walls.

(They jussle one another.)

Job. What, will you wrestle a Fall with me? Come on. Take that lusty Lug you Rogue of a Saint, with a Pound of Ear on each Side.

(Jobson gives Noddy a Fall, and lugs him by the Ears.)

Lady. Impudent Villian, has he not hurt the good Man?

Nod.

Nod. He hath very much disorder'd my two Ears, and bruise'd me exceedingly.

Sir Rich. You deserve it for a meddling Coxcomb, go to your Book, your ignorant Fop, and read, and rely more upon good Sense, and less upon your new Light.

Lady. Oh wicked vile Wretch, was ever poor Lady so miserable, so horridly miserable in a Brute to her Husband as I am, I that am so pious, so good, and religious a Woman?

Nod. She is an holy, a sanctify'd Vessel truly.

[Jobson peeps in and sings.]

Jobson
Sings.

*He that has the best Wife,
She's the Burthen of, &c.*

And some ten times a Day hoop her Bar.
(rel.)

Lady. O Rogue, Scoundrel, Villain.

Sir Rich. Remember *Modesty*.

Lady. Are you gone, Sirrah? I'll rout the rest of you: I'll spoil your squeaking Treble.

*She lays about her, they all run, she breaks the
blind Fiddler's Fiddle about his Head.*

Fid. O Murder, Murder! I am a dark Man, which way shall I get hence? Oh Heaven! She has broken my Fiddle, and undone me, my Wife and Children.

Sir Rich. Here, poor Fellow, come this way, take your Staff; there, there's Money to buy two such Fiddles, go, there's your Way.

Fid. Heaven preserve your Worship, bless you sweet Master, here's a Change indeed, little did I think to live to find such Doings at this Hall-place.

(Two Wassalers come to the Door singing a Wassal Song.)

Lady. You are very liberal, must my Estate maintain you in your Profuseness?

Sir Rich. Go up to your Closet, pray, and compose your Mind.

Lady. Oh wicked Fellow, to bid me pray.

Sir Rich. A Man cannot be compleatly curs'd without a Wedding; but there is such a thing as separate Maintenance, and a Joynter-House, which she to Morrow shall try,

try, by the Help of Heaven; I will no longer bear this Nuisance in my House. Here, where are my Servants, what must they be frighted from me? Within there, *Chipp*, come here, and see who knocks there.

[*A knocking at the Door.*

Lady. Within there, where are my Sluts, ye Drabs, ye Queans: Lights there.

[*Enter Boy with a Candle.*

[*Two Maids come sneaking in with Candles.*

Enter Butler again.

But. Sir it is a Doctor that lives ten Mile off, with his Man, he practices Physick, and is an Astronomer, and a Cunning-man, your Worship knows him, he can make Almanacks, and help Men to their Goods again.

Enter Doctor and his Man.

Doct. Sir I am benighted, 'tis so dark, I cannot see my Hand, I cannot possibly reach home, and therefore knowing the Bounty of your Worship's Hospitality, I desire the Favour to be harbour'd under your Roof this Night.

Lady. Out of my House, you lewd *Conjurer*, you *Witch*, you *Magician*.

Nod. Avant thou Instrument of *Satan*, I defy thee and all thy Works, thou wicked Sorcerer avant.

Lady. If you stay in my House, you shall be worse used here, than your Predecessor *Dr. Lamb* was in the City.

Doct. Here's a Turn, here's a Change, which, if I have any Art, she shall smart for.

Sir Rich. You see Friend the Case is alter'd with me, I am not Master of my House, but e're to Morrow this time, I'll be Monarch here: Go down the Lane Friend, and about half a Quarter of a Mile off, you'll see a *Cobler's House*, stay there some little time, and I'll send my Man that shall conduct you to a Tenant's House,* who shall take care of you.

Doct. Thanks good Sir, I'm your humble Servant, but you *Noncon*, with your furious she Disciple there, shall

shall have some Proofs of my Magick Art this Night.

[Exit Doctor and his Man]

Sir Rich. Come Lady, you and I must have some Conference.

Lady. Yes I will have a Conference and Reformation too in this House, or else I'll turn thee inside outwards.

[Ex. Sir Richard and Lady.]

Nod. My Mind gives me, these *Varlets* have left some good Thing in the Bowl there; but hold, is it not a *Wassaling* superstitious Spice Bowl, let me see, hah! it is very comfortable and edifieth, there's a huge Island of Toast, Nutmeg and Sugar, I will attack it, it is chearing; I have a Paper with some Parmazan in my Pocket, which will eat very well with it, this is also a pleasing Liquor, I will drink plentifully of it, and eat Toast exceedingly: Ah! my Spirits are cheered as it were, and are excited unto Joy and Gladness.

Enter Butler and Cook.

Cook. Oh that sweet-tooth'd lickerish Hypocrite, who is always eating, and looks as if he had never eaten.

But. His Meat does himself no more Good, than his Doctrine does others; stand close, you'll see him devour that Punch-Toast, he'll never be contented without all in the Bowl.

Cook. It will disguise him most wickedly; and make him as drunk as one of the Profane.

Nod. It doth begin to invade my upper Region, my *Pericranium* doth seem to be somewhat inclined unto Giddiness! hah, the Room appeareth to turn round.

[He biccups, belches and sneezes, and is drunk.]

But. He is overtaken.

Cook. 'Tis a very seasonable time, I'm just going to knock to Supper, and my Lady won't eat without his Grace.

Bo. Go quickly, he's in a sweet Pickle for a Grace of a Quarter of an Hour long, as he used to make 'em.

[The Cook knocks up to Supper within, it goes up.]

Nod. Where am I? Am I in the Buttery of my own Closet; a most excellent Spice, I'll promise you.

Enter Jane.

Jane. Where are you Mr. Noddy? Supper is on the Table, and my Lady stays for your Grace.

Nod. Is it Supper-time, say you, now I think of it, I begin to be hungry.

But. Pray Sir make haste, my Lady stays for you?

Nod. What is the Matter with me? I think my Feet are asleep, I cannot use them, my Eyes are somewhat dim too; which is the way?

But. Ay, the Rogue hears my Master intends to turn over a new Leaf, and he has a Mind to wind about, but this shan't serve his Turn, he's a Fanatick Rogue still.

[Noddy staggers, they lead him out.]

[Ex. omnes.]

Scene the Cobler's House, Nell, the Doctor, and his Man.

Nell. Pray Sir mend your Draught, if you please, you are very welcome, Sir.

Doct. Thank you heartily good Woman, come I'll give you some Requital, I'll tell you your Fortune.

Nell. Oh! Pray do Sir, I never had my Fortune told me in my Life.

Doct. Let me behold the Lines of your Face?

Nell. I'm afraid 'tis none of the cleanest, Sir, I have been about dirty Work, Sir, all this Day.

Doct. Come, 'tis a good Face, be not asham'd of it; you shall shew it in greater Places suddenly.

Nell. Oh dear, I Sir? I shall be asham'd mightily, I want Dacity when I come before great Folks.

Doct. You must be confident, I charge you, and fear nothing, there is much Happiness attends you.

Nell.

A Comical Transformation.

15

Nell. Oh me, this is a rare Man, Heaven be thanked.

Doff. To Morrow before Sun rise, you shall be the happiest Woman in this County.

Nell. How, by To-morrow? Alack a day, how can this be?

Doff. No more shall you be troubled with a surly Husband that shall rail, call you Names, and strap you.

Nell. Lord, how came he to know that? He has a Familiar: Indeed my Husbaud is somewhat rugged, and in his Cups will beat me, but it is not much: He's an honest painful Man and I let him have his Way; pray Sir take the other Cup of Ale.

Doff. Thank you, To-morrow you shall be the richest Woman in the Hundred, and ride in your own Coach.

Nell. O Father, now you jeer me.

Doff. By Heaven I do not, but mark my Words, be confident and bear all out, or worse will follow.

Enter Jobson.

Job. Where is this Quean: Here *Nell*, what a Pox are you drunk with your Lambs-wool.

Nell. Oh Husband! Here's the rarest Man, he has told me my Fortune.

Job. Pox on you, and has planted my Fortune too, a lusty Pair of Horns upon my Head, has he?

Doff. Thy Wife's a vertuous Woman, and thoul't be happy.

Job. Come out, ye hang Dogs, ye Jugglers, ye cheating Villains, must I be cuckolded by such Rogues as you are, Mackmaticians, and Almanack-makers.

Nell. Prithee Peace Husband, we shall be rich, and have a Coach of our own.

Job. A Coach! A Cart, a Wheel-barrow you Jade, by th' mackin She's drunk, bloody drunk, get you to Bed you Strumpet.

(He beats her.)

Nell. Oh Mercy on us, is this a Taste of my good Fortune?

The Devil of a Wife: Or,

Doff. You had better not have touch'd her you surly Rogue.

Job. Out of my House you Rogues, or I'll run my Nail up to the Handle in your Buttocks.

Doff. Farewel you paltry Slave.

Job. Get you out you Rogues.

*(Scene changes to the open Country.
(She shuts the Door and goes in.)*

Doff. What? Hoh my Spirits, Nadir and Abishog, hoh?

Enter Nadir and Abishog flying down.

Nadir. }
Abishog. } Here, we'er here.

Doctor. Presto, all my Charms attend :
 Ever this Night shall have an End,
 You shall this Cobler's Wife transform ;
 And to the Knight the like perform.
 This Bead the Coblers Wife I'll charm
 The Knight's into the Cobler's Arm ;
 Let the Delusion be so strong,
 That none shall know the Right from Wrong.
 The Non-con Parson so afright,
 That he may ever rue this Night ;
 Scare him from his little Wits,
 And his Hypocritick Fits,

Nadir. } *All this this Night we will perform,*
Abishog. } *In a Whirl-wind, in a Storm.*
In Lightning and in Thunder.

Doctor. Fly,
 And muster all the Clouds i'th Sky ;
 Attend me till the Dawn of Day,
 And then you may go sport and play.

Hold,

A Comical Transformation.

17

Hold, here comes Sir *Richard's* Man, he'll guide us to our Lodging, let us meet him; to Horfe.

(Exeunt Omnes.)

Scene Sir Richard's House, the Dining Room, Sir Richard, Mr. Rowland, Mr. Longmore.

Sir Rich. Well my dear Friends, tho' you have found my House in some Disorder, I cannot but rejoyce to see you; the Sight of Friends will lighten great Afflictions.

Row. Some Years have past since we have been merry together.

Long. We have not met these five Years: Marriage, Travel, Business, and your Retirement, Sir *Richard* have thus separated us.

Sir Rich. Us, that for several Years, of pleasant frolick Youth, were ne'er asunder.

Row. I call methinks a pleasant Season back, here's a Brimmer to our old Acquaintance.

Sir Rich. About with it.

Long. But now 'tis late, we keep you out of Bed from your new Wife.

Sir Rich. A Wife! Oh Friends take Warning, marry not, I say, do not marry.

Row. Why? You have a handsome Lady and a rich one.

Sir Rich. Oh Gentlemen, I would be glad to have the Witch of *Ender*, were she alive instead of her, I am link'd to an Amazonian Devil, such a Thalectris, such a perpetual Fixen, and a Shrew, such a Tongue, that 'twould be a Blessing to be lodg'd in *London*, with a Silver-smith under me, a Brazier overhead, a Trunk-maker and a Pewterer on either side of me, and all of 'em industrious Rogues to boot; a Blessing I say in Comparison of her continual Clamour, all those Noises in Consort are soft and gentle Harmony to her own single Voice.

Long. Methought she look'd somewhat proudly, her Countenance between Scorn and Anger.

Sir Rich. She with'd crooked Pins in every bit of Meat

you eat, and Poyson in every Glas of Wine you swal-
low'd.

Row. Say you so, 'tis time for us to leave you then.

Sir Rich. No fear not, this Night is the last of her short Reign, I have sent for her Father to dine with me to morrow, and after Dinner I will pack her away with her separate Maintenance, and then we'll spend the *Christmases* in Freedom, Mirth, and Jollity, and I am overjoy'd you are here to be Witnesses to my Proceedings.

Enter Jane.

Jane. Sir, my Lady commanded me to tell you, she'll rout you and your lew'd Companions, if you come not away presently, I hope you'll pardon me. (*Exit Jane.*)

Sir Rich. Tell her I come, I am sent for. But here's the other Brimmer to my Deliverance.

Long. Away with it.

Sir Rich. I lay my whole Misfortune now before you, I have not only married an indefatigable Scold, but a Fanatick into Bargain; nay I have married her Chaplain too, who was, I take it, a Weaver, and ordain'd himself by Virtue of outward Grace, and inward Knavery; have a care, I warn you of a Bigot or Zealous Woman, for be she never so wicked, she will be always so full of spiritual Pride, she'll think you a Limb of Satan.

Row. 'Tis a just Observation.

Long. And for a Chaplain, I would as soon have a Russian in my House, for he must govern; or the Wise will Rage.

Sir Rich. Right: Then my Friends, I conjure ye have a care of separate Maintenance; a damn'd Invention to make Whores and curst Wives as bad; I would not marry the Queen of *Sheba* were she alive upon those Conditions.

Row. All this daily Experience tells us.

Sir Rich. A Curse of an Owl that must try and would not trust Experience, but at his own cost: Another Point is, for I am bound in Charity to warn you, have a care
of

A Comical Transformation. 19

of an ill born or ill bred Woman, there is a much in the Strain, as in Horses or Dogs, we all take after our kind.

Long. You are in the Right of it, I have not heard a better Preaching.

Sir Rich. And for Breeding, tho' almost all Women are Fools, yet those that are well bred, by the help of that will behave themselves with some Discretion and good Manners at least, and now in what a Case am I that under all these Curles which I warn you from? How irksome must it be to me, who with my first dear Wife, that Saint in Heaven, had all the Happiness that Man on Earth was capable of?

Row. 'Tis hard, but like to be as short.

Sir Rich. One more to the Memory of my former Wife, a Brimmer to help to drown my Sorrow for this.

Long. Let it go round; we knew her.

Row. She deserv'd all Honour.

Enter Lady.

Lady. Now Shame upon you and your filthy Companions, I'll make your Glasses and your Bottles fly; and that lew'd Minister of your Debauchery, your Butler, I'll rout him, for not bringing me the Key of the Cellar, a Rascal.

(Sir Rich. whistles.)

Enter Servants.

Row. Your Pardon, we are going.

Lady. Going? Yes, to make one another drunk, and for all Night about it, ye may be asham'd ye Beasts, why do I call you Beasts? Beasts scorn to be drunk like you.

Sir Rich. This Gentlemen, is my sweet Lady.

Lady. Gentlemen! Your fellow Sots, your guzzling Drunkards, get ye to Bed ye Spunges.

20 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

Sir Rich. Light the Gentlemen; your Fires are ready:
You see I am under Correction, sweet Princess.

*If you in one would sum up ev'ry Curse,
Take such a Sponse for better and for worse.*

ACT II.

Enter Butler, Cook, Serving-Man disguis'd.

But. **W**E have had a hard Tug to give these Gentlemen Men their Bellies full.

Cook. But at last we have fous'd 'em quickly up to some Tune.

Serv. Man. I am bouzy and right for Mischief, let's execute our Design upon Non-con.

But. Have at him; are your Jack-Chains and your humming Tops ready?

Serv. Man. They are, I have 'em here, he must be drunk, with a Pox to him, and could not say Grace.

But. A curse on him, he stagger'd against my Side-Table, and brake twenty Shillings worth of Flint Glasses. And tho' we all deposed against his Drunkenness, our pious Lady called us perjur'd Rogues, and said he had eaten something that did not agree with him.

Serv. Man. And when we could not get him to himself, my Lady said it was an *Apoplexy*.

Cook. Ay, and made me heat a Frying-pan red hot, to hold over his Pate, from which she had made the Hair be shav'd off.

Serv. Man. Nay, she has employ'd all her Skill in Physick upon him; she has laid a huge Caustick Plaister between his Neck and Shoulders to raise Blisters, which will make him roar before Morning.

Cook.

A Comical Transformation. 21

Cook. His Head's all raw with the fingeing, if he had not begun to roar, I believe she would have carbonado'd him for his *Apoplectick* Drunkenness.

But. What Sport it will be when he wakes! He'll wonder what the Devil they have done to him, he'll be plaguy sore.

Cook. Now he has almost slept out his first Sleep, he'll wake half sober, devilish Sick, and in Pain and 'twill be a fit time to begin our Persecution upon him.

But. I am afraid we shall make him distracted with the Fright.

Cook. If we make him mad, he may get some Wit by the Bargain, he's now so dull a Rogue, that any Alteration would be for the best.

But. Come put on the Shapes.

Serv. Man. Here, the Dogs will fit me, *John Cook* shall be the Bear, and you shall represent great *Belzebub* himself.

But. Agreed, hang on your Chains, list how the Rogue snorts like a Sackbut, let's withdraw into our Tying-Room, and then enter.

*The Scene opens and discovers Noddy in bed,
and they Enter.*

Nod. Mr. Chip, Butler Chip, I say some Small Beer, give me an Ocean of Small Beer, I will swim in Small Beer.

But. He's between sleeping and waking, now to your Work.

Nod. Mercy on me, where have I been? I am all on Fire, and my Head all burnt; is the Bed or the Room on Fire? Fire, Fire, Fire, hah Heaven what Noise is that! Hah it is *Satan* verily, what *Fiends* are those in Chains? Oh *Faith*, *Faith!* where art thou? I am frail frail, even as one of the wicked! Oh! Mercy, Mercy, how I dissolve, who are ye, in the Name of Hea-

*They set the humming
Tops a going,
then rattle their
Chains.*

ven?

22 *The Devil of a Wife : Or,*

ven? Speak, what will they do? Will they fetch me from hence? Oh *Satan!* Sweet *Satan*, dear *Satan*, spare me, thou mistakest me, tempt me not, I am not Righteous, I am wicked, yea, even as one of the Profane, I am an Hypocrite truly, a zealous Hypocrite, verily: Oh spare me, *They pull all the cloth off the Bed,*
oh! oh! Sweet *Satan*, dear *Satan*, spare me.

[*He holds 'em with all his Strength, and roars
(They cease a while.)*]

But. This is enough in the Dark, now let him behold ye?

Nod. Oh, oh, I conceive there is a Light now in the Room, let me see if I dare open my Eyes: Oh Heaven! What *Fiend* is this comes to me? It is like a Dog, oh! *He brings in a Light.*
oh! I conjure thee, *Fiend!* Say what thou art; in the Name of Heaven, *The Serving Man in his Dog's Shape creeps to the Bed.*
if thou beest a Dog, speak, oh, oh, what's here, a Bear? Avaunt, avaunt, O good *Satan* forbear, oh what's here the chief Devil! I dare not see any more, oh sweet *Belzebub*, spare me, Mercy, good *Satan*.

[*The Cook lies down on the Bed like a Bear, Noddy
& roars yet louder, and shrinks under the Cloaths, and
[speaks.*]

But. Art thou a true fear'd Hypocrite?

Nod. Yea, I am, I am.

But. Falsely zealous, and truly seditious?

Nod. Oh, oh, I, I am, Sir.

But. Most immoderately given to thy Gut?

Nod. Yes, yes, my great Delight is in Creature Comforts.

But. The chief Motive to thy Zeal, those Creature Comforts, thou get'st by thy Hypocrisie?

Nod. Oh, oh, yes verily.

But. By this thou hast committed Carnality with Elder's Wives and Daughters, and hast been much given to Concupiscence.

Nod.

Nod. 'Tis true, most exceedingly.

But. You use not Copulation with the Wicked, for fear of Scandal?

Nod. No, I engender only with the Righteous: Good Sir, have done, I am half dissolv'd.

But. By this thou get'st thy self made *Executor* and *Trustee*.

Nod. Oh yes, it is the chief End of my Profession to prey on Orphans.

But. Oh Rogue! Ha what a dreadful Thunder-Clap was that.

[It Thunders and Lightens.

Serv. Man. What a Storm is this arising?

[Serv. and Cook come from the Bed.

Cook. God's Body, what a Clap was there; it shook the House.

Serv. Man. Come let us be gone, we have tormented him enough.

Cook. No, no, this will help us better to affright him.

But. The Rogue shall no longer rail at auricular *Confession*, who has confessed, as he thinks, to the Devil.

(Nadir rises with a great Thunder-Clap, and appeareth to them.

Nod. Oh! I am almost dead, sure the *Fiends* are gone, and have carried this End of the Building with them at that last Clap.

(He is preparing some Toads on a Plate.

But. Come, come, t'other Bout.

Nad. Ah, come, come.

(Nadir rises.

Cook. Hah *Tom*! What's this? We are four now.

Serv. Man. Why *Ned*? we were but three, ha! one, two, three, four.

But. Ha *John*! what's the Meaning of this? who is this?

Cook. Nay, what a Pox know I? I am sure we were but three, we are increas'd one in Number.

Serv. Foh, what a Stink of Brimstone's here.

(The

24 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

(The Spirit is placing a Toad upon a Plate, the Spirit goes to Noddy, he eats a Toad, and on his Fork presents Noddy with another.

But. Let me see, what is he a doing?

Nod. There is Silence, now let me peep out. Oh Heaven!

Nad. Here, Parson, eat this Toad, here, will you eat this Toad?

But. Oh Heaven! what's this? my Hair begins to stand on End.

Nad. Eat this Toad, I say.

Nod. Oh, no, good *Satan*, I hate a Toad, it is too like Fish, and I could never endure Fish, because the Papists eat so much.

Nad. Who will eat a Toad?

(Nadir turns him to the Company, Fire flashes about him.

Butler.

Cook.

Serv. Man.

} Oh the Devil, the Devil, oh, oh.

(They run roaring out, and Noddy roars, the Scene shuts upon the Bed.

Cook, Butler, Serv. Man, re-enter.

But. Help, help.

Cook. The Devil, the Devil.

Serv. Man. If ever I fright any Body again, may I suffer the *Strapado*.

Enter Sir Richard with a Candle and his Sword drawn.

Sir Rich. What Noises are these? here are Thieves in my House; what, ho, where are my Servants?

But. Here, Sir, we are got up, there have been most horrible Disturbances in the Parson's Chamber; he roars like a furious Bull with the Dogs about him, listen.

Nod. The Devil, the Devil; Murder, Help, Help.

Sir Rich. Hang him, the Rogue's drunk still, is it he that has disturbed the House?

(Noddy

A Comical Transformation. 25

(Noddy comes running in roaring with a Blanket about him.)
Nod. Oh the Devil, the Devil, avoid thou Tempter.

Enter hastily Rowland and Longmore, with their Swords drawn with a Light.

Rowl. What's the Matter here?

Long. Oh Sir Richard, we have been so disturbed with Noises, we thought some Rogues had got into your House, and were committing a Robbery.

Sir Rich. It's nothing but a drunken Zealot, that has been troublesome in his Cups, and he has disturb'd the House.

Nod. Drunk! I defy thee and thy Works.

Long. Ha, what Apparition is that?

Basil. Apparition, where, where?

Sir Rich. I shall soon make your Apparition vanish.

Nod. I have seen a Vision this Night.

Sir Rich. What of Malt and Hops, Punch and Stratsburg Brandy, or a Fool's Head in a Looking-Glass? take him and lock him into his Chamber.

Nod. Oh for Heaven's sake! 'tis haunted with Devils, I have been tormented all Night: They have laid a Plaster of melted Brimstone upon my Shoulders, and singed my Head with sulphurous Flames, Oh, the Devil! the Devil!

(They hurry him off, and lock him up.)

Sir Rich. You shall disturb the House no more to Night: Gentlemen, I am sorry that this Fanatick Preacher should disturb you; he was drunk last Night, and fancies he's haunted with Devils; he's nothing but frightened with the Thunder and Lightning, at this time of the Winter.

Rowl. Which has been the strangest I ever heard, I thought the House had fallen down, or at least part of it.

Long. Such Thunder in this Winter-Season is prodigious, methinks it should fright the Women out of their Wits.

Sir Rich. I could not wake my sweet Lady, she lay as if she were dead, I believe it is her Property to be silent in a Storm, and ever tempestuous in a Calm.

The Devil of a Wife: Or,

Sir Rich. See what's a Clock by the *Pendulum*.

(Ex. Serv. and re-enters.)

Serv. 'Tis within less than half an Hour of Five.

Rowl. 'Tis almost time to think of hunting; you told us we should see your Harriers run.

Sir Rich. Let's to your Chambers, and rest an Hour or two? we have Game just by.

Long. With all our Hearts.

Sir Rich. Bid the Grooms be ready; Butler, do you call us, and Cook be ready with a Breakfast, come, Gentlemen, our Way is the same.

[Ex. omnes.]

Enter Nadir and Abishog.

Nadir. Well met, 'tis time we now be gone,
Already all our Work is done;
The Transformation's wrought so sure,
The Doctor's time it shall endure.
The Lady's in the Cobbler's Hut,
The Cobbler's Wife to th' Knight is put;
And we defy the sharpest Sight,
Ever to distinguish which is Right.

(They sink down.)

Scene the Cobbler's House. Jobson in his Stall, his Bed in sight.

Job. What has the Devil been abroad to Night? I never heard such Thunder-Claps and such a Storm, I thought my little House would have flown away. But now all is clear, and 'tis a fine Star-light Morning. Come, I'll to work: Winter's Thunder is Summer's Wonder.

*In Bath a wanton Wife did dwell,
At Chaucer he did write;
Who wantonly did spend her Days
In many a fond Delight.
Upon a time sore sick she was;
And at the length did dye:
Her Soul at last at Heaven Gate
Did knock most mightily.*

The

*Then down came Adam to the Gate,
Who knocketh there quoth he?
I am the Wife of Bath she said;
Who fain would come to thee.
Thou art a Sinner Adam said;
And here no Place can'st have:
Alack for you, good Sir, she said,
Go Gipp you doating Knave.*

Lady. How now? what impudent Ballad-singing Rogue's that, that dare awake me out of my Sleep? I'll have thee flea'd, thou Rascal.

Josf. Why? what a Pox, does this Jade talk in her Sleep, or is she drunk still. *(He sings on.)*

*I will come In in spight she said.
Of all such Churls as thee:
Thou art the Cause of all our Pain,
Our Wor and Misery.
Thou first brok'st the Commandements,
In Pleasure of thy Wife.
When Adam heard her tell this Tale,
He ran away for Life.*

Lady. Why, Villain, Rascal, Skreech-Owl; a worse Noise than a Dog hung in the Pales, or a Hog in a great Wind. Here, where are my Servants? come and hamstring the Rogue. *(She knocks.)*

Josf. Why, how now, you sawcy Jade, you confounded Quean, you must be drunk with Conjurers, you shall have Money for Lambs-Wool, you whoreson Drab.

Lady. Death! what Dog is this, where is my Bell? I can't find it to ring, where's my Servants? I'll toss the Dog in a Blanket.

Josf. She is asleep sure, and all this is a Dream; the Conjuror told her she should keep a Coach, and she is dreaming of her Equipage, ha, ha.

(He sings on.)

Lady. Why, Husband, Sir Richard do you hear this Insolence?

Joh. Husband, Sir Richard, what a Pox has the Knighted me? My Name is Zerk! too, here's a Jest indeed.

Lady. Hah he's gone, he's not i'th' Bed, Oh Heaven! where am I? foh, what savour is this in my Nostrils? here are stinking Leather Breeches, and a Leather Apron, here are Canvas Sheets, and filthy ragged Curtains, a beastly Rug, and a Flock Bed: Am I awake? or is all this a Dream? what Rogue is that? Sirrah, where am I? who brought me hither? Rogue! what Rascal are you?

Joh. This is most amazing, I never heard such Words from her; so God save me, if I take my Strap, I'll make you know your Husband, and teach you a little better Manners, you saucy Drab.

Lady. Oh astonishing Impudence! you my Husband! I'll have you hang'd, you Rogue; I'm a Lady, Sirrah, let me know who gave me a sleeping Potion, and convey'd me hither.

Joh. A sleeping Potion, a Pox on you, you drunken Jade, you had a sleeping Potion, has not your Lamb-Wooll done working yet?

Lady. Where am I? where has my damn'd villainous Husband put me? why, Jam, Lettis, where are my Queens?

Joh. Ha, ha, ha, what does she call her Maids? the Conjurers have not only made her drunk, but mad too.

Lady. He talks of Conjurers, sure I am bewitch'd, ha, what Cloaths are here? here's a Linsey Woolsey Gown, a Callicoe Hood, and a red Bays Petticoat, and Shes with Hobnails. I'm removed out of my own House by Witchcraft, what shall I do, or what will become of me?

Joh. Hark the Hunters, and the merry Horns abroad, wily Nell you lazy Jade! 'tis break of Day, come to work, come, come and spin you Drab, or I'll swinge your lazy Hide for you? Pox on you, must I be working two Hours before you in a Morning?

Lady. Why Sirrah, you impudent Villain, do you know me?

Joh. Know you, yes, and will make you know me before I have done with you.

Lady.

A Comical Transformation.

29

Lady. I am Sir Richard Lovemore's Lady ; how came I here ?

Job. Sir Richard Lovemore's Lady, no not so bad yet, she's a damn'd stinging Fanatick Whore, and plagues every one that comes near her, the whole Country curses her.

(She flings the Bedstaffs and Lumber at his Head.)

Lady. Nay then I'll hold no longer, you Rogue, you insolent Villain, have at you.

Job. This is more than e'er I saw by her, she's mad sure, I never had an ill Word from her before ; come Strap, I'll try your Mettle ; I'll fetch you out of your drunken Fits, you Maukin, come, come on Hufwife.

(He straps her, she flies at his Throat, they fight.)

Lady. Oh murder, murder, I'll pull your Throat out, I'll tear your Eyes out, I'm a Lady, Sirrah, Sir Richard Lovemore will hang you for this.

(They fight, and she cries out.)

Enter Countryman.

Countrym. Why Neighbour *Jobson*, What is the Matter, I was going to fodder my Cattle, and heard Murder cry'd here.

Lady. Oh Fellow, do you know Sir Rich. Lovemore ?

Countrym. Ay marry do I well enough, he's my Landlord, he's as honest a Gentleman as any is in forty Mile of his Head.

Job. Prithee Neighbour don't mind her, she was drunk yesterday with Conjurters, she's mad still, and I can't get her up to her Spinning Work.

Lady. Oh help me, I'm Sir Richard Lovemore's Lady, convey'd hither I know not how, to be tormented and lam'd by this outrageous Villain.

Job. Did not I tell you she was mad, come out you Jade, I'll fetch you to your Spindle.

Countrym. Hold you Neighbour, this is a pretty Whirlegig ? I know my Lady right well. and Goody *Jobson* too ; ah Goody *Jobson* I'm sorry to this, you are mad indeed : my Lady quo' she.

(He takes the Candle and looks on her.)

D 3

Job.

The Devil of a Wife: Or,

Job. What a Fox do you think I don't know my own Wife? that Mole under her left Eye.

Countrym. A Lady, no Neighbour *Jobson*, thou art ten times better a Woman, no dispraise to her, she's the heartiest Jade that ever came ith' Parish, the whole Country curses her.

Lady. Oh he has bruised me, and lamed me, and I am almost dead with the Stench of this filthy Place; either I am remov'd by Enchantment, or they have given me Opium, and in a dead Sleep they have brought me hither? are you in earnest? Look on me, do you not know my Lady *Lovemore*? I'll give you a hundred Pound, and carry me home. *(They both laugh.)*

Job. Why you mad Beast, you my Lady *Lovemore*? A Fox on her, I know her well enough, she gave me three or four damn'd Blows of the Pare last Night, in her own House.

Lady. I did so, I remember you now, I did give you those Blows of the Pare in my House last Night.

Countrym. Why Goody *Jobson*, why do you think I am blind? I do not know my Lady? a plaguy Quean, why all the Country rings on her.

She falls upon the Country-Fellow, and beats him out of Doors, he runs out, crying help, help.

Lady. This is a Conspiracy of Rogues.

Countrym. Help, help, if she be not my Lady, she has learnt of my Lady. *Ex. Countrym.*

Lady. Is this the Rogue my Husband's revenge upon me? Here's Cloath, here's filthy Rags; oh foh! Oh miserable Woman! I shall be deliver'd and make 'em rue for it.

Enter Jobson with a Rock and Spindle.

Job. Come, come you Quean, I'll make you leave your fooling, come to your Spindle, or else I'll lam your Hips, you were ne'er lamm'd so since you were an Inch long. Take it up you Jade.

(She flings it down, he straps her.)

Lady. Hold hold, what shall I do? I can't spin.

A Comical Transformation. 34

Job. Oh! I thought I should bring you to your self to work. I'll unto my Stall, 'tis broad Day now, why why, you awakard Jade. I think her Brains are turn'd, she has forgot to spin.

(He sings and stitches.)

Lady, I know this Place, I'll try my Feet, I'll run into the Town, some Body will secure me there sure.

(She runs out, he follows her.)

Job. What does the Jade run for? I'll after her.

The Scene changes to Sir Richard Lovemore's House.

The Bed Chamber, Nell Jobson in Bed.

Nell. What heavenly Dreams I have had this Night! Methought I was in Paradise, upon a Bed of Roses, and of Violets, and the sweetest Husband by my Side; sure it was a Dream, Ha! Where am I now! Bless us! What Sweets are these about me! No Garden in the Spring can equal them, nor Buds of Roses with the Dew upon them, am I upon a Bed? The Sheets are Sarcenet sure; no Linnen ever was so fine; what a gay silken Robe have I gotten! Oh Heaven I dream! I dream! Nothing but Point, and Lace, and Gold, and Fringe: Oh let me never awake! Nothing but Gold, fine Work and Carving. Oh Father, what a Glass is there! There's a sumptuous Carpet upon the Table, and silver Plate; sure I dy'd to night in my Sleep, and am gone to Heaven, and this is it!

Enter Jane.

Jane. Now must I go to be call'd Whore or Jade, and fifty other Names, I must wake an Alarm that will not lye still till Midnight at the soonest, Madam, Madam.

(She goes sneaking towards the Bed.)

Nell. Lord who is this, what sayst thou sweet Heart.

Jane. Sweet Heart, O Lord, Sweet Heart! The best Names I have had these twelve Months from her, have been Whore or Jade: Madam, what Gown and what Ruffles will your Ladyship please to wear to Day?

Nell. Oh Lord, what does she mean? Ladyship, Gown and

32 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

and Ruffles, sure I am awake now, I remember the cunning Man.

Jane. Say you Madam?

Nell. The same I did Yesterday, Child.

Jane. Mercy upon me! Child! Here's a Miracle!

Enter Maid sneaking.

Maid. Is my Lady awake, and have you had e'er a Slipper or a Shoe flung at your Head yet?

Jane. Oh no I am overjoy'd, she is in the kindest Humour, nothing but Love and Sweetness, go to the Bed and speak to her now, now is your Time.

Maid. You laugh at me, now is your Time says she, what to have an Eye beaten out or another Tooth? Madam. *(Softly.)*

Nell. What sayst thou Girl? Father, what would she have?

Maid. What work will your Ladyship have me do to Day? Shall I work Plain-work, or go on my Parchment?

Nell. Work sayst thou, why? 'Tis Holiday Child, No Work to Day.

Maid. Oh Mercy, am I or she awake! Or do we both dream!

Jane. Did not I tell you?

Maid. Here's a blest Change!

Jane. If it continues we are all made, we shall be a happy Family.

Nell. Who's that?

Enter Footboy with Billets.

Foot. Now shall I be condemn'd to the Dog-whip instead of a Breakfast.

Jane. Some Billets for your Ladyship's Fire.

Nell. That's a good Boy.

Foot. O Lord, O Lord, is that my Lady?

(He runs out jumping.)

Jane. Go Sir, she's in a rare Humour.

Nell. Prithee Sweet-heart give me my Things, I'll rise,

rise, I can't abide to lye in Bed.

Jane. Have I my Sences or not, Good lack?

Nell. This cunning Man is a rare Man; he said I must bear it out, I'm amazed! I know not what to do.

(Jane gives her a rich Morning Gown.)

Jane. Here's your Ladyship's Morning Gown.

Nell. Where are my Eyes, they are dazzled; this is a Robe fit for an Angel to wear. Bless me, I shall not know my self.

(Aside.)

(She rises from her Bed.)

Maid. Your Ladyship's Chocolate's ready.

Nell. Mercy on me, what's that? 'Tis some Garment sure, well put it on then Sweet-heart.

Maid. Put it on Madam, I have taken it off, 'tis ready to drink.

Nell. Drink says she? I mean put it by, I don't care for drinking.

Enter Footboy and Cook.

Cook. Now go I like a Bear to the Stake, to know what her scurvy Ladyship will have for Breakfast, how many rascally Names shall I be called.

Foot. You are mistaken, there never was such a Change, she's nothing but Goodness, you'll be overjoy'd to hear her.

Cook. You arch Dog, I'll lug you by the Ears, Sirrah, if you play the Rogue with me.

(Exit Footboy.)

Maid. Oh! *John Cook* you'll be out of your Wits to see this Change, oh, she's the sweetest Lady!

Cook. What the Devil are they all mad!

Jane. Madam, here's the Cook come to know what your Ladyship will please to have for Breakfast.

Nell. Oh Lord there's a fine Cook; he looks like one of your Gentlefolks. *(Aside.)* I am very hungry indeed, honest Man, pray get me a Rasher upon the Coals, and a Piece of one Milk Cheese, and some white Bread.

Jane. Here's Humility, what a Conversion's here!

Cook. Hey whar's to do here! What the Devil's the Matter! My Head turns round; where am I? Honest Man

Man! I look'd for Rogue or Rascal at the best.

Jane. Oh Madam, that will lye heavy upon your Ladyship's Stomach, he'll get you some dainty Dish immediately.

Nell. Do then even what wo't, good Mr. Cook.

Cook. Good Lord! Good Mr. Cook! Oh 'tis a sweet Lady. *(Aside.)*

And by my Troth I will Madam presently. I'm overjoy'd, methinks I could leap out of my Skin.

Enter Butler.

Chip, kiss me, prithee kiss me I say; I'm out of my Wits. We have the rarest Lady, the sweetest Lady that ever Men serv'd; go and be astonish'd as I am.

But. You shamming Rogue, I think you are out of your Wits indeed; what the Devil doth he mean? The Maid looks merrily too.

Jane. *Chip* the Butler is come Madam to know what your Ladyship will please to drink: Come near Mr. *Chip*, you'll be amaz'd. *(Aside.)*

Nell. Good Mr. *Chip*, let me have some good small Beer when my Breakfast comes up.

But. Mr. *Chip*! Mr. *Chip*! I shall be turn'd into a Stone with Amazement. Madam, wou'd not your Ladyship please to have a Glass of *Frontinque* or *Lacryma*?

Nell. Oh me, what hard Names are these! I must not betray my self. *(Aside.)*

Yet if you will Mr. Butler.

But. Heaven and Earth, I'm amaz'd! Here will be Joy! Go get you in and be happy as I am, Joy, Joy.

(Exit Butler.)

Enter Coachman.

Coach. The Cook has been bantering I do not know how long, does the Butler banter too.

Jane. Madam, the Coachman is at the Door.

Enter

Enter Coachman.

Nell. Come in good Coachman.

Coach. Will your Ladyship please to take the Air to Day? If so, which will you have the Coach or the Chariot?

Nell. Thank you, which you think convenient.

Coach. Oh Heaven! The Sky will fall!; what's this?

(He goes out smiling.)

Nell. Sure I cannot be awake, how overjoy'd they all seem to wait on me. Oh notable cunning Man, I'm the happiest Woman, I grow giddy with my Happiness, I'll retire and give Heaven Thanks for this.

(Aside.)

Where is my Common Prayer Book?

Jane. Common Prayer Book! Here's a turn; what will *Non-con* say? Your Ladyship has none, but here's my Masters.

(She takes it. Exeunt.)

Nell. Thank you Sweet Heart.

Enter Sir Richard and his two Friends from hunting.

Sir Rich. How do you like this, Gentlemen? we have had a smart turn or two.

(All the Servants flock about him.)

Row. I never followed fleetier Dogs that had any Noses.

Long. I hate your meer fleet Hounds, that kill presently in View, it is as bad as courting.

Sir Rich. Methinks there's Pleasure to see 'em hit it off at a fault, as well as there is in hard riding.

Long. And to see the doubles and shifts an old Hare will make for her Life, faith beyond a Fox.

Sir Rich. I spare my Horses to Day, which made me come Home so soon, but to morrow you shall try my Fox-hounds, and then Gentlemen I will lead you a Dance

But. Sir, here's the rarest News.

Jane. There was never the like, Sir you'll be overjoy'd and amaz'd.

Sir Rich. What are ye mad? What's the Matter with you?

Enter

36 *The Devil of a Wife: Or*

*Enter Coachman, and three or four Servants
more jumping in.*

Sir Rich. How now, what's the Matter? Here's a new Face in my Family, what all Joy and Mirth, what does it mean, or is it a *Christmas* Gambol?

But. Oh Sir the Family is turn'd topsy turvy, we are almost distracted, we are the happiest People.

Jane. I cannot contain myself, my Lady, Sir my Lady.

Sir Rich. What is she dead?

But. Dead, no Heaven forbid, she's the best Lady, the sweetest Lady.

Jane. Oh the dearest, kindest Lady, you are the happiest Man, Sir, living.

But. Never was such a Change, such a Miracle, why, all the House will lay down their Lives for her.

Jane. She has oblig'd us all the kindest and the sweetest, we'll live and dye with her.

All the Servants. } Ay, all, all of us, long live her
Speak together. } Ladyship, God bless her Ladyship.

Abail. O she's the best Lady in the World, I could kiss the Ground she goes on.

But. I could kiss the Dirt of her Shooes, she's the sweetest gentlest natur'd Lady breathing.

Sir Rich. Why? Give me Breath a little; what do you mean?

But. 'Tis true, 'tis true Sir, go in to her your self and be Witness of her strange Change, none but Heaven could work such a Miracle.

Sir Rich. This is most astonishing; Gentlemen you see how I am surpris'd, if you please to dress, I'll in and see the meaning of this Wonder, I'm impatient till I go in.

Jane. Sir you may put off your Boots and dress first, she's at Prayers with the Common Prayer Book in her Closet, and will be private for half an Hour.

Sir Rich. How! Common Prayer-Book? New Prodigies! What miraculous Power has been here at work? My Friends, if this be true, I shall rejoice indeed.

Exit.

But. True, ay 'tis true enough, long live Sir *Richard* and his Lady, Heaven blest 'em both, huzzah, huzzah.
(*Ex. omnes*)

A C T III.

Enter Nell and Jane.

N*ELL.* I well remember the Cunning Man warn'd me to bear all out with Confidence, or worse he said would follow, I am aſham'd, and know not what to do with all this Ceremony; I am amaz'd, and out of my Senſes; I look'd i'th' Glaſs, and ſaw a gay fine Thing I knew not; methought my Face was not at all like that I have ſeen at home, in a Piece of Looking-Glaſs faſt'ned upon the Cupboard. But great Ladies they ſay, have flattering Glaſſes, that ſhew them far unlike themſelves, whiſt poor Folks Glaſſes ſhow e'en as they are.

Enter Sir Richard.

Jane. Oh Madam, here's my Maſter now return'd from Hunting.

Nell. Oh Heaven! This goodly Gentleman my Husband!

Sir. Rich. My dear, I am extreamly pleas'd to ſee my Family thus transform'd to all the Joy imaginable, which, as they tell me, you have created in them.

Nell. Sir, I ſhall be always overjoy'd at what gives you Delight, and ſhall be ever glad if I can pleaſe your Family.

Sir Rich. Oh Divine Softneſs! this Gentleneſs of thine tranſports me.

E

Nell.

Nell. Alas, Sir, what am I? I am asham'd of my own Meanness, I shall be glad to be a fellow Servant here, you are Lord of all, Sir.

Sir Rich. Dear Creature, if thou continuest thus, I had rather be Lord of thee, than of the *Indies*!

Nell. You make me blush, Sir, I hope I shall have Grace never to be otherwise.

Sir Rich. I am astonish'd; can this be real?

(She kneels.)

Nell. All that's good above can witness for me: I am in earnest.

Sir Rich. Rise, sweetest Creature, what has wrought this admirable Change?

Nell. Alas! I never did offend you, nor any of them.

Sir Rich. *(Aside)* What does she mean? I have not known a Calm within my House these six Weeks: but Yesternight you triumph'd over me, and all my Family, was not that Offence?

Nell. It was not I; I sure was not my self then, indeed, I find my self so much changed, I scarce know who I am?

Sir Rich. It is a blessed Change.

Nell. It is so; I have that Pleasure in my Mind, that every thing I see ravishes me with Joy, such a sweet House, such brave Furniture, such ready loving Servants, and so noble, so sweet a Lord and Master: Oh Father! I know not where I am methink.

Sir Rich. Heaven be thanked for this: I would not lose this Dear, this blessed Creature, for all the Wealth and Power that Kings can boast of.

Nell. 'Tis, sure, Heavens doing: and I can never have another Mind; 'tis wondrous that I ever had methinks.

Sir Rich. And I am confirm'd: Joy! Joy! Oh Heart make room for Joy! it will overwhelm you else; upon my Knees I kiss this dear, dear Hand: Thou art so rare a Creature, I shall worship thee.

Nell. Nay, hold Sir! pray Sir! what do you do? indeed you make me cry, I am so asham'd, oh Father! so
brave

have a Gentleman to kneel to me ; 'tis my Duty to do that.

Sir Rich. Hold Heart, I say contain thy self ; where are my Friends, my Servants, call 'em all, and let 'em be Witnesses of my Happiness.

Nell. O Lord ! how shall I behave my self before these Gentlefolks.

Sir Rich. And wilt thou never chide, nor quarrel with me more, and shew thy Fury amongst my Servants ?

Nell. I'll cut my Tongue out first, oh Lord, I chide !

Sir Rich. I have one thing more, wilt thou go to Church with me, and leave the sniveling Conventicle ?

Nell. Yes surely, Sir, I'll do what e'er you please, I'll have nothing to do with Fanaticks, they are a melancholy, ill-condition'd People.

Sir Rich. Sure 'twas an Angel spoke in thee, thou art the best of all thy Sex, I hope thou art convinc'd that the Fanatick Chaplain was drunk last Night ; wouldst thou let me discard him, there wants nothing then to compleat my Happiness.

Nell. Yes, Heaven forbid else : what shall I disobey my Lord and Master.

Sir Rich. Let me embrace my Dear, my Love, and prithee seal this Promise with a Kiss.

Nell. Oh rare sweet Man ! he smells all over like a Nofegay, Heaven preserve my Wits. *(Aside.)*

Enter Rowland, Longmore, and all the Servants.

Sir Rich. Gentlemen, behold this Day, here stands the happiest Man that the Sun shines on ; I am transported beyond my Senses ; I here proclaim a Jubilee to all my Family these three Months ; summon in all the Country ; I'll keep open House, send for my Fiddlers, Hautboys, Trumpets and all Instruments of Joy ; let all the Bells in the Hundred ring, let the Steeples rock, and let the Ringers drink enough ; here stands the best of Women, and of Wives the kindest, and the gentlest Mistress to her Servants ; and she that has given me all this Happiness.

The Devil of a Wife: Or,

Nell. Lord, Sir, you put me out of Countenance. I blush, I'm sorry that I ever angered you, indeed I'll do you all the Good I can, I should be to blame else.

All the Ser-^{ts} God bless my Lady, long live her Ladyship, we'll live and die with her.

Sir Rich. My Dear, you did affront these Gentlemen last Night, speak to 'em.

Nell. Indeed I was not my self, I'm sorry that I was uncivil, I hope to mend.

Rowl. We are your Ladyship's humble Servants, and largely must partake of the great Joy which now possesses all the Family.

Lougm. Joy, Joy, to both the Bridegroom and the Bride; 'tis a new Wedding.

Sir Rich. 'Tis true; some three Months since, I did espouse her Body, this Day I'm marry'd to her Mind; this is a perfect Wedding; go send for all my Tenants, there shall be nought but Feasts and Revels here.

Nell. This will be a brave time, how I shall joy to see it.

(A Flourish of Musick without. Enter Serving-man.)

Serv. Man. Your Fiddlers were going by, having heard that my Lady would not allow of Musick, but I call'd 'em in.

Sir Rich. You did well; my Dear, do you not love Musick?

Nell. I love nothing better.

Sir Rich. That's my Joy, my Life; call in my Musick: Gentlemen, I'll make 'em sing a very unfashionable Song to you in the Praise of Marriage, a Piece of my own Poetry in my last Wife's time.

(They come in, and sing the Song.)

*Let the vain Spark consume all his Store,
In keeping an expensive Whore,
For others to employ.
For all those Snares and Baits he pays,
Which see for other Gallants lays,
And he must least enjoy.*

Keep

A Comical Transformation.

41

*Keep Whores then as Perfumes you wear,
Of which your selves have the least Share :
Of others Claps partake.
Your Bodies bring to the Surgeons Hands,
And to the Scriveners all your Lands :
And give her your last Stake.*

*While with Reason we bless the Fate,
That brings us to the Marriage State,
The only happy Life.
The chief Enjoyment in a King,
No Wealth, no Power, such Joy can bring ;
As does a Wife, a tender Wife.*

*There can be no true Friend beside,
So oft does Interest divide ;
But they are so conjoin'd.
By this most Sacred Rite are grown,
That they are not one Flesh alone,
But they are both one Mind.*

*But, Sir, here are some Country Neighbours hearing
of the happy Conversion, desire to dance before you.*

Sir Rich. Let them come in.

(They dance.)

Enter Noddy wrapt up in his Night-Cap.

Noddy. What meaneth this iewd Noise ; this most
prophane abominable Jigging ? Lady, I must rebuke thee,
in pure Zeal, I must rebuke thee, I cannot bear it.

Sir Rich. Thou insolent Fool, be silent, I will have
no Fanaticks, no Law-breakers within my Walls, espe-
cially no Hypocrites, you were drunk last Night, you
Swine.

Nod. I defy thy Words, it was a Fit, I was taken
with a Fit, a grievous Fit : Lady, what say you, are you
become like one of the wicked Ones ?

Nell. I will obey my Lord and Master, his Will is
mine.

The Devil of a Wife: Or,

Sir Rich. Retire to your Chamber, you shall not be seen this Day; to Morrow I will tell you more of my Mind.

Nell. What's this, she is not as she was; *Jampridem mulieri ne credas ne mortua quidem*; I may not go, I will not retire, my Zeal telleth me, I must rebuke thee, and I will thunder in thine Ears.

Sir Rich. Turn him out.

Nell. I may not go, I say I will not retire, my Zeal transporteth me, I am become furious.

(They thrust him out.)

Enter my Lady's Father.

Sir Rich. Father, you are welcome, doubly welcome; I sent for you upon another Occasion than I now find: Heaven has order'd things another Way, we are all transported with Excess of Joy, my Dear salute your Father.

Nell. Good Heaven! my Father; what means this? sure I shall be distracted, but I must bear it out. *(Aside.)*

(She kneels to ask Blessing.)

Father. What meaneth this? 'tis superstitious, and is-uous of Idolatry.

Sir Rich. 'Tis nothing but her great Humility.

Father. I like it not.

(The Cook knocks to Dinner.)

Nell. I shall endeavour then to please you, Sir.

Father. 'Tis well, I am glad to see you and my Son-in-Law well; but what's the Cause of this unwonted Joy, of this Transport?

Sir Rich. The Cook has knocked to Dinner: let's in, you there shall have a full Account, and be a joyful Wit-ness of our Happiness.

(Ex. omnes.)

Scene changes to Jobson's House.

Lady. Was ever Woman yet so miserable? I cannot make out in the Village yet acknowledge me; they sure
are

A Comical Transformation. 43

are all of the Conspiracy, this wicked Husband of mine has laid a devilish Plot against me; I for the present must submit, that I may get an Opportunity into my Hands for Design; here comes a Rogue I will have strangled, but now I must yield.

Enter Jobson.

Job. Come on *Nell*, art come to thy self yet?

Lady. Ay, I thank you, I wonder what failed, this Cunning-Man put Powder in my Drink most certainly.

Job. Powder! the Brewer put good Store of Powder of Malt in it, that's all, Powder quo she, ha, ha, ha!

Lady. I never was so all the Days of my Life.

Job. Was so, no, nor I hope ne'er will be so again, to put me to the Trouble of Strapping you so devilishly.

Lady. I'll have that Right Hand cut off, for that you were unmerciful to bruise me so. *(Aside.)*

Job. Why? Faith I'm sorry for't, but it did you a great deal of good tho', why? you would have been mad, and call'd your self my Lady *Love-more* till this time else: why come, why don't you spin?

Lady. I can't, you have bruise'd my Arms so, when they are well, I'll work hard.

Job. That's my good Girl, I'll buy some Plumbs to make thee a mince'd Pye, come let's be Friends, Faith kiss and friends.

Lady. Oh cursed impudent Rascal, what does he say?

(She turns from him.)

Job. Nay prithee now, Faith I won't strap thee so no more.

Lady. I must stay till this be well, before I forget it.

Job. Ounz if you go to that, I will kiss you.

(He kisses her and smacks.)

Lady. Oh foh, how the Beast stinks of Cheese, Leather-Apron, Pitch, Grease, foul Linnen, and old Shoes.

(Aside.)

Enter

44 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

*Enter the Country Fellow with two or three more
with him.*

C. Fellow. Why Neighbour *Jobson*? why don't you
put on your Bond, and go to the Hall-place?

Job. Why, what's the Matter?

C. Fellow. Matter! why? there's such a Change,
they are all out of their Wits, there's open House to be
kept there till *Castlemas*, all the Tenants are sent for,
why you'll lose your Dinner.

Lady. What do I hear? here's fine Work indeed.

(Aside.

Job. What the Devil is to do there? Is that damn'd
Jane my Lady dead.

C. Fellow. Nay, I know not, we shall hear when I go,
the Bells ring, do you not hear 'em? and there's Order
given for all the Parishes hereabouts to ring, Barrels of
Beer, Flaggons of Brandy, and Money for the Ringers,
and Alms to all the Poor are order'd.

Lady. Death, what's this? Here's a Rout when I am
gone, did they pack me away for this, I shall have all
my Estate run out.

C. Fellow. Come, come, make haste.

Lady. Husband, shan't I go with you?

Job. Why, what ail'st thou: Did not I tell thee I
would strap thee Yesterday for desiring to go, art thou
at it again?

Lady. What does this Villain mean by Strapping, and
Yesterday?

Job. What a Pox, I have been married but six Weeks,
and you long to make me a Cuckold already; stay at
home, there's good cold Pye in the Cupboard. But I'll
trust thee no more with Strong Beer, Huzwife.

Lady. Well, you will have your way, I must do what
you bid me.

Job. That's a good Wench, God be with you, come
on Neighbour.

(Ex. Jobson and Neighbour.

Lady.

A Comical Transformation. 45

Lady. And I'll be there not long after you, sure I shall meet some there that are not of the Conspiracy.
(*Ex. Lady.*)

Scene Sir Richard's House, Sir Richard, and all the Company at Dinner.

(*Serv. Man whispers Sir Richard.*)

Father. Son in Law Sir Richard I long to see Mr. Noddy, methinks I did not eat the Meat with Appetite, since he did not bless the Creature.

Sir Rich. Sir to tell you the Truth, he is very sick, he was drunk last Night, I am sorry to say it to you.

Father. Son-in-Law, I know you are a Lukewarm Formalist of the Episcopal way, and you are glad to say it, but I believe it not.

Sir Rich. Pardon me, Sir, I do not use to lye, the whole Family are Witnesses of it.

Father. I fear me they are all too much of the same Batch, will my Daughter affirm this?

Nell. I must needs say what Sir Richard says.

Father. Come, Gentlemen, perhaps he might, e'er he was aware, be overtaken with the Creature; he might be transported perhaps with Zeal, and so the sooner overtaken, and so 'tis not a Sin, but a Frailty in him that is Righteous, I must see him.

Sir Rich. But 'tis a Sin in us: very good Doctrine!

*The Zeal stand Centry at the Gate of Sin,
Yet all that have the Word pass freely in.*

(*Ex. Foot-boy, and brings in Noddy.*)

Father. I am sorry to see you ill Mr. Noddy.

Nod. Bless your Worship.

Father. Now we have din'd let him give Thanks.

(*Noddy is humming and hawing, in order to his Grace.*)

Enter Lady.

Lady. Here's a Riot and a Rout, you Surrah, Butler, Rogue, *But.*

46 *The Devil of a Wife : Or,*

But. Why how now? What a Pox is to do with you, who are you?

Lady. Impudent Varlet! Don't you know your Lady?

But. Why how now you Quean? Here, turn this Madwoman out of Doors. *(She strikes him.)*

Lady. 'S'Life you Rascal take that Sirrah, why Sirrah, don't you know your Lady? My Lady *Loveemore*, Hands off, I am the you Regue.

(She flings the Glass in his Face which he had in his Hands, and the Serving-man lays hold on her.)

Serv. man. Why you sawcy Jade! Huzwife have a care, here's a good Pump, we'll cool your Courage for you.

Lady. Why *Jane*, Huzwife, sure you do not forget me?

Jane. Forget thee Woman! Why I never remember'd thee, In'e'er saw thee in my Life.

Lady. Oh wicked Slut! I'll give thee Cause to remember me. *(She pulls her by the Headcloths.)*

Jane. Oh murder, murder! help, help!

Sir Rich. How now, what Uproar's there?

Lady. You Jade, *Lettice*, what won't you know me neither? I'll make you know your Lady.

(Lady strikes her, she breaks from him.)

Maid. Help, help

Sir Rich. What's to do there?

But. Why here's the Madwoman falls a beating and lugging us, and calls her self my Lady.

Sir Rich. Some *Christmas* Frolick, some Neighbour has a Mind to be merry.

Nell. I warrant it is a Bess of Bedlam.

Lady. Oh here's my Chaplain, sure he is not of the Conspiracy against me! Mr. *Noddy*! Thou art an Holy Man.

Nod. I am so Woman, what would thou have with me?

Lady. What art you blind? Do you not know me because I have these filthy Clothes on? Look on my Face, I am the most injur'd, the most abused Lady that ever yet drew Breath.

Nod.

Nod. Lady! Woman, art thou not mad in Truth?

Lady. Why Sirrah, are not you my Chaplain? You base Villain, did not I lay on the Plaster to your Shoulders, and a red hot Pan to your Head last Night, and sav'd your Life?

Nod. Oh Heaven! This is the Sorceress that bewitch'd me this Night, lay hold on her, she is a Witch.

Father. Why Master *Noddy*, art not thou troubled in Spirit? It is surely a Trick, a Gambol.

Lady. My Father here! I am so distracted with my Grievs and Sufferings I did not see you; but now I must embrace you, and never leave you till you succour and revenge me for the most Barbarous Usage that ever Lady suffer'd: Speak, will you not speak to me, honour'd Father?

Father. I know thee not, I fear thou art some lewd Woman, be gone, Hands off.

Lady. Nay, then I am desperately miserable.

Nod. She is a Witch, and did confess it to me, I will have her burnt.

Sir Rich. Stand by, there must be something more than ordinary in this Business. (*Exeunt Noddy and Father.*)

Long. What the Devil can this mean?

Row. What should it mean? Some poor Madwoman is got loose.

Sir Rich. Why I never saw thee; thou my Wife? Poor Creature, I pity thee.

Lady. Nay it is in vain to hope for Redress from thee, thou wicked Contriver of all my Misery.

Nell. How I am amaz'd! Is that I there in my Cloths, that have made this Disturbance? Oh Father! I am here in these fine Cloths, how can this be? And yet to my thinking I am there, I am so confounded and affrighted, that I shall begin to wish I were with *Zekel Jobson* again.

Lady. To whom shall I apply my self, or whither shall I fly? Oh Heaven what do I see! Is not that I there in my Gown and Petticoat I wore Yesterday? how can it be when I am here? I cannot be in two Places at once.

48 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

Ros. Surely no, unless thou wer't a Bird, but come Sir, let's be deaf to these vile Gambols and retire.

Sir Rich. Poor Creature she's stark mad.

Lady. What in the Devil's Name, was I here before I came hither? That I should come hither, and find that I was here before I came, is the strangest Thing to me, let me look in this Glass. Oh Heaven I am confounded, I know not any self, if that be I that's represented in the Glass, I never saw my self before.

Sir Rich. What incoherent Madness is this?

Enter John.

*Lady point. } There, there's the Devil in my Likeness,
ing to Nell. }* that has rob'd me of my Countenance.
Life is he here?

John. Ay, that must be the Devil that's in your Likeness, remember my Strap, you Queen.

Lady. How inevitably wretched am I?

Nell. O Lord, I am afraid my Husband will beat me that am on yonders Side.

John. Gallants pray pardon her, she was drinking with a Conjuror last Night, and she has been mad ever since, and says she is my Lady *Loosemore*.

Sir Rich. Poor Woman, take care of her; and do not hurt her, she may be cured of this.

John. Cured, yes and please your Worship, you shall see me cure her with this Strap immediately. Hufwife do you see this?

Nell. Hold, hold pray do not beat me, *Zekel*.

Sir Rich. What says my Dear? does she infect thee with Madness too?

Nell. I am not well, my Head turns round.

(The Maid goes in with Nell.)

Enter Butler.

Sir Rich. Wait on your Lady in.

John. I beseech your Worship don't take it ill of me, she shall never trouble you more.

Sir

A Comical Transformation. 49

Sir Rich. Take her home, and use her kindly, I'll send my Physician to her; he shall cure her I warrant you.

Job. Thank your Worship most kindly, come *Nell*.

Lady. What will become of me?

(Exeunt Jobson and Lady.)

Sir Rich. How now, where's my Father in Law?

But. He has taken Coach; he bid me tell you he loves no *Christmas-Gambols*, and he took this for one.

Long. It is a very odd one, take it all together, as e'er I saw?

Row. Methought there was a Method in her Madness; she did not know her self i'th the Glass.

Long. And if you observ'd, your Lady utter'd some strange Words.

Sir Rich. She did so, which did very much amaze me.

Row. But that I have not much belief in Magick, I should have odd Thoughts of this.

Sir Rich. Now you have put me in mind of it, there was something in the latter Part of the Story, very strange and very surprizing.

Enter Serving-man.

Serv. man. Sir, the Doctor who call'd here last Night, desires a Word in private with you on earnest Business.

Sir Rich. What can this mean? Bring him to me?

Enter Doctor.

Row. We'll take a turn and wait on you suddenly.

Sir Rich. Your Servant Gentlemen, be gone Servants.

(Exeunt Rowland, Longmore and Servants.)

Doct. Low on my Knees I fall, and beg your Pardon, and put my Life into your Hands, I have exercis'd my Art of Magick on your Lady, I know you are an honourable Man, and will not take my Life, who might have still concealed it from you, if I had pleased.

Sir Rich. Methinks you have brought me to the Glimpse of Misery, too great for me to bear. Is all my Happiness come only to a short liv'd Vision and a Dream?

Doff. Sir I beseech you, fear not, if there be any harm towards you, I freely will give you Leave to hang me.

Sir Rich. Can *Magick* bring me any thing but ill?

Doff. I never yet did Mischief by my Art; there are *Aerial Spirits* I command which do no hurt, they are *Sylphs*.

Sir Rich. What have you done? inform me.

Doff. I have so transform'd your Lady's Face, she seems to be the *Cobler's Wife*, and charm'd the Face of *Johson's Wife* into the Likeness of your Lady's, and when the Storm arose, my Spirits remov'd each to the others Bed.

Sir Rich. Oh miserable Wretch, thou hast undone me, I am fallen from the Top of all my Hopes, and still must have a most tempestuous Wife, that Fury whom I never yet knew quiet, since the first Minute I had her.

Doff. If that were all, I could continue the Charm for both their Lives.

Sir Rich. I'll have no Happiness from Hell; all my Blessings must come from Heaven, and I will hang you, if you do not undo your Charm, let the Event be what it will.

Doff. I'll do it in a Moment, and perhaps you'll find it is the luckiest Moment of your Life, I can well assure you your Lady will prove the best of Wives, give me your Pardon Sir.

Sir Rich. Upon Condition you undo the Charm, I will.

Doff. It shall be done, and you shall find all my Prediction true.

Sir Rich. Hold, there is yet a material thing, which I must know.

Doff. I will resolve you, Sir.

A Comical Transformation. 51

Sir Rich. Hold, there is yet a material Thing, which I must know.

Doff. I will resolve you, Sir.

Sir Rich. May be to crown this Mischief I have suffer'd, the Cobler may perhaps have made me a Cuckold.

Doff. Then cut his Throat, for e'er she was transported to that Bed; the Cobler was got up, besides he has done nought but beat her ever since, and you are like to reap the Benefit of his Labour.

Sir Rich. Go about thy Business, I'll send for him and her.

(Exeunt.)

Enter Butler and Noddy.

But. I can assure you, there's no staying for you in this Family; my Lady has yielded all up to my Master's Power.

Nod. Why look thee *Edward Chip*, thou art mistaken in me, I can conform in many things, rather than leave so good a House, and so good People.

But. Where there is so much eating.

(Aside.)

Nod. At least tho' I cannot conform inwardly, I will conform outwardly; and that will do your Business as well, give us some Wine, they shall see what I can do.

Enter Serving-Man, Cook, and all the Servants.

But. With all my Heart, Gentlemen you are come in good time to be merry with Mr. *Noddy*.

Nod. Ay Gad I'm in a merry Humour.

Cook. Here's a pretty Turn.

Nod. Give me a Beer-Glass, here's the King and all the Royal Family, huzzah: t'other, here's *Sir Richard Lovemore's*, huzzah: the t'other, nay, Gad take me, give me a third, here's my Ladies, huzzah: pledge me all of you, and let every Bumper be a Facer thus.

(They drink off their Glasses, and Huzzab:)

50 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

Seren. Is that a Face, Faith 'tis very pretty.

Nod. Nouns, I'll have you to know, I can be as good Company as e'er a He that wears a Head.

*He that wears a brave Soul, and dares honestly do,
He's a Herald to himself, and a Godfather too.*

But. Here's a Transformation!

Nod. Come Faith, let's sing a Catch.

*A Boat, a Boat, hast to the Ferry,
For we came over to be merry;
To laugh and quaff, and drink old Sherry.*

Enter Sir Richard by the Door.

Sir Rich. Here's a Turn; here's a Hypocritical Regue, I think we shall have *Ovid Metamorphosis* in this House; but I am too much concern'd to mind this Diversion? but where are my Friends I wonder.

(Ex. Sir Richard.)

Enter the Waffallers, and sing their Waffal Song.

(Noddy joins with 'em in the Song.)

But. Come on Friends, and fall heartily to our *Christmas* Gambols after a Rouze or two.

(They fall a drinking.)

Rear. What you tell us, Sir, has much of Wonder in it.

Long. It is prodigious, if it prove true.

Nod. Come now, let's have a Dance.

(Noddy kisses and ruffles the Waffallers.)

But. Now Parson, let's have one *Christmas* Gambol; we'll play the Blacksmith.

Nod. Ay, come withal my Heart, how is that.

But. Come we'll show you, you shall down first, here, down upon this Form.

Nod. Ay come, come, Gad I'm almost drunk.

But

A Comical Transformation.

93

But. Come I'll play the Smith, and blow the Bellows, ye are my two Journeymen.

(They beat upon him like two Smiths with Boots, he roars out Murder, Murder, and all the Company laugh, and they leave off when Sir Richard speaks.)

Cook. }
Servant. } We are ready.

But. Before you lay him on.

Enter the Cocker.

Sir Rich. How now *Jobson*, have you brought your Wife with you?

Job. Yes and please your Worship, she's here at the Door, a little from the House, she fell into a Swoond, I thought I ne'er should have recover'd her: But at last a Tweak or Two by the Nose, and half a Dozen Straps, has done the Business. Here, where are you, Husbands, come in?

Sir Rich. Light there, 'tis very dark.

(Butler holds the Candle.)

(He lets fall the Candle, and Serving-man takes it up.)

Enter Lady.

But. Oh Heaven and Earth, what's this my Lady.

Job. What does he say, is my Wife changed to my Lady?

(The Servants run away and sneak.)

Cook. I thought the other was too good to be my Lady.

Lady to Sir Rich. You are the Person I have most offended, to whom I must confess I have been the worst of Women, bating I have kept my Body undefil'd; it has pleas'd Heaven to punish me most sharply for my Crimes. Heaven left me to suffer under the Power of Enchantment; I am fully sensible of all my Faults, and since I abhor 'em, and detest my self for them, I hope that Heaven and you will pardon me; here will I kneel

94 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

and fix till I have procured yours at least, and Heaven be Witness to my Resolutions. The Remnant of my Life shall be employ'd in Duty and Observance of you, if you'll vouchsafe to take me to your Bosom.

Sir Rich. Rise, Madam, I forgive you, and if you be sincere, you'll make me happier than all the Enjoyments of the World could do.

Jos. What a Fox must I lose my Wife thus? where the Devil is my t'other Wife? here's conjuring indeed.

Enter Jane and Maid.

Jane. Oh Sir the strangest Accident has happen'd, it has amaz'd us, and almost bereft us of our Senses, my Lady was in so great a Swoon, we thought she had been dead.

Maid. And when she came to her self, she prov'd another Woman.

Sir Rich. Ha, ha, that's a Bull indeed.

Jane. She is so chang'd, I know her not, I never saw her Face before: O Lord is this my Lady?

Maid. I shall be beaten again.

Jane. I thought our Happiness was too great to last.

Lady. Fear not, my Servants, Sir let 'em all be called in, I will give Ease and Quiet to your Family, I am a hearty Penitent; good Servants I acknowledge I have been too harsh and rigorous to ye all, but Heaven has given me another Mind; it shall be my Endeavour to make ye all happy. I'm sure no Mistress shall outdo me in Kindness and in Gentleness.

(All the Servants and Tenants come in.)

Sir Rich. Hold in this Mind, thou wilt be the best of Women, and I the happiest of Men, the other was a false and short liv'd Joy, but this I hope will long continue.

Lady. May Heaven wreak all its Vengeance on me, if once I alter from this Resolution, or e'er I contradict your Will again.

Sir Rich. This is a Day of Wonders.

Enter

Enter Nell.

Nell. my Head turns round, I must go home; why *Zekel* what are you there?

Job. Look you, look now, hey dey, what a Devil, what's that Queen my Wife? here's a rare Business, Gad I dare not come near her.

Sir Rich. 'Tis rare indeed, we have all this Day been under the Power of Enchantment, to which Heaven knows there was not my least Consent. Heaven often turns even the Malice of Devils to produce a good End; this is, no doubt, a happy Change, I'll celebrate it with all the Joy I did proclaim for my late short liv'd Vision.

Lady. To me 'tis happier than my Birth-Day was.

Sir Rich. Now, Madam, since you have resign'd your Will to me, where is the Chaplain.

But. Here Mr. Noddy, where are you, he's in the Buttery; here come in.

Noddy enters drunk.

Sir Rich. behold your Saint here!

Lady. I do confess my self in the wrong.

Sir Rich. Go Hypocrite, I discard thee.

Nod. Discard me, for what; Nounz I'll conform, what a Pox do you mean?

Sir Rich. Thou wicked Wretch, thou Scandal to thy own Profession, would'st thou maliciously thus bring one on ours, by thinking to conform by being vicious? Detested Beast be gone, carry him to his Chamber, our Church condemns all such Debauchery, tho' such vile Wretches wou'd bring a Scandal on it. Give him ten Pound, and in the Morning send him packing: here *Jobson* take thy fine Wife.

(They carry him out.)

Job. But hold, Sir, did not your Worship make me a Cuckold under the Rose.

Sir Rich. No, upon my Honour, nor ever kiss'd her till I came from hunting, she was my Bed-fellow for a little while.

56 *The Devil of a Wife: Or,*

while, and for this happy Change, I'll give thee with her five hundred Pound, buy Store of Leather, and be my Shoe-maker, I'll help thee to all the Custom in the Country.

Joh. Ho Boys, I am a Prince, a Prince, come hither *Nell*, come to thine own dear *Zekel*, I'll never strap thee more.

Nell. Indeed I have been in such a Dream, I'm quite weary of it.

Joh. kneels. Can your good Ladyship forgive my strapping your good Ladyship so very much?

(To the Lady.)

Lady. With all my Heart, the Joy of this blest Change makes all things good again.

Nell. Forsooth, Madam, will you please to take your Cloaths, and let me have mine again.

Lady. No, thou shalt keep 'em, and I'll preserve thine as Reliques.

Sir Rich. Gentlemen, let me present you to my Wife.

Ros. We wish your Ladyship all the Joy your Heart can hope for.

Long. May all your Life be ever happy, Madam.

Lady. Gentlemen, pray pardon me, I think I was a Madwoman last Night, Heaven now has brought me to my self.

Sir Rich. No more of this Subject.

Proclaim my Joys in every Place aloud.

Bonfires surround my House, let the Bells ring,

Let's dance and revel, feast, carouze and sing.

All the Ser-ants cry } Long live my Lady and Sir Richard.

Jobson. Now let me speak, if I may be so bold,
Naught but the Devil sure can tame a Sold.

THE EPILOGUE;

Spoken by Mr. *Jevon*,
and Mrs. *Percyval*.

Mr. *Jevon*. **C**ome *Nell*, prithee while I dress for the Dance, speak something in my Behalf to these Friends of mine here, for I'm sure they are all Friends.

Mrs. *Percyval*. Who I *Zekel*; Oh Lord you know I want Dacity when I become before great Folks.

Mr. *Jevon*. How now, Huswife dare you dispute it? remember my Strap you Quean.

Mrs. *Percyval*. Hold, hold, good Husband, I'll try what I can do?

To the People. Oh most curious fine Gentlefolks, I hope you will pardon me for being so bold, but ne'er stir, I'll never let you alone till I find you kind to poor *Zekel*, for he's as pretty Fellow as e'er sirapp'd Wife.

Mr. *Jevon*. Why how now, what a Pox is all this for? what speak an Epilogue in Prose? (the Devil) I could have done that my self you foolish Jade. For example now.

(Addresses himself to the Audience, and makes a long Banter, and goes off, after that he speaks.

Look you Huswife, there as good Prose, as any is in *Englant*; but I must have it in Verse, all beaten Verse, away with it.

E P I.-

EPILOGUE.

Mrs. Percyval.

YOU cannot sure ungenerously refuse,
The first Address of a young tender Muse;
So modest that she ne'er attempts to fly,
Up to the lofty Pitch of Comedy;
Farce is her Aim, the Persons low and mean,
Humble the Language, homely is the Scene,
Let this poor Shrub secure from Censure grow,
For all the Criticks stormy Rage too low:
If you'll your thundering Indignation vent,
Let it on lofty Sunbust all be spent.
Applauded Nonsense where sad Lovers pine,
And Heroes vain and fight, and cry and whine;
And the old Buskins empty smelling Strains,
That cracks the Players Lungs and Poets Brains,
These, these are Triumphs for your Forces fit,
But who upon a Drall e'er spent his Wit;
Or criticiz'd on Merry Andrew yet?
Whilst all the lofty Frigots you attack,
Pray let in Safety pass this little Smack.
Your Shot 'gainst us will waste i' th' empty Sky,
The whistling Bullets o'er our Heads will fly;
We lye so low, your Cannon mount too high.

FINIS.

3

3